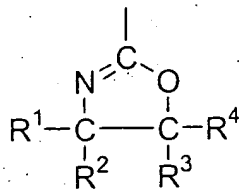
IN THE CLAIMS

1. (cancelled)

2. (previously presented) A photothermographic material comprising a support having provided on at least one side thereof a photosensitive silver halide, a photo-insensitive organic silver salt, a reducing agent for silver ion and a binder, wherein at least one layer constituting said photothermographic material comprises an oxazoline compound, wherein said oxazoline compound is a compound having two or more 2-oxazolyl groups represented by the following formula (1) in the molecule,



(1)

wherein R^1, R^2, R^3 and R^4 each independently represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl group or an aryl group, wherein R^1, R^2, R^3 and R^4 each does not independently represent a hydrogen atom at the same time, and the alkyl group or the aryl group may have a substituent.

3. (original) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 2, wherein said oxazoline compound is a polymer having the 2-oxazolyl group represented by the formula (1) in the side chain thereof.

4. (currently amended) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein at least one of constitution layer or layers provided on the same side of the support as said layer comprising the photo-insensitive organic silver salt comprises the oxazoline compound.

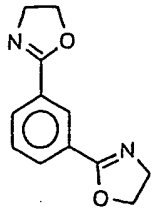
5. (original) The photothermographic material as claimed in claims 4, wherein said layer comprising the photo-insensitive organic silver salt and one or more layer selected from layer or layers adjacent thereto comprise the oxazoline compound.

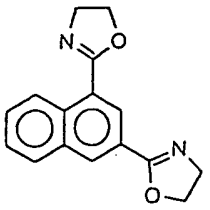
6. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 2, wherein the oxazoline compound is a low molecular weight compound having two or more 2-oxazolyl groups further comprising an organic connecting group between the two 2-oxazolyl groups.

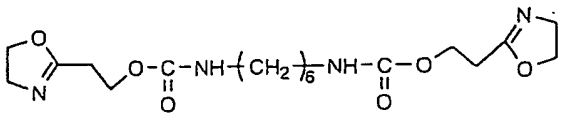
7. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 6, wherein the connecting group comprises di- or poly-valent aromatic hydrocarbon groups having 6 to 20 carbon atoms, di- or poly-valent aliphatic hydrocarbon groups having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, and combinations of these with -O- or -C(=O)NH-.

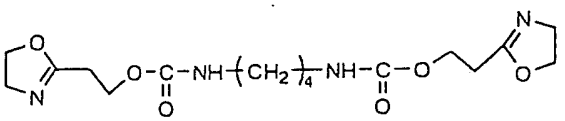
8. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 7, wherein the organic connecting group is selected from the group consisting of a p-phenylene group, an m-phenylene group, a 1,3-naphthylene group, an ethylene group, a butylene group, a xylene group, an octylene group, a 1,2,3-propanetolyl group, a 1,3-propanediyl-2-ilydene group, and $-CH_2CH_2O(C=O)NH-(CH_2)_n-NH(C=O)OCH_2CH_2-$ (wherein n is 2, 4 or 6).

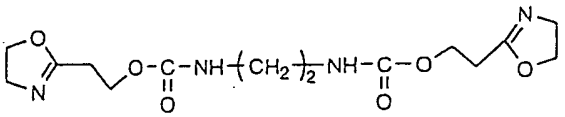
9. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 6, wherein the low molecular weight compound containing two or more 2-oxazolyl groups is selected from the group consisting of:

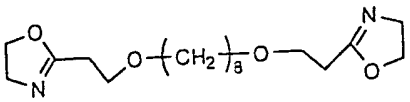


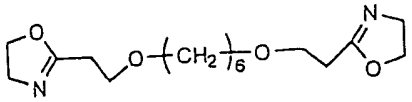


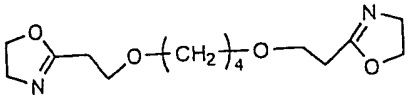




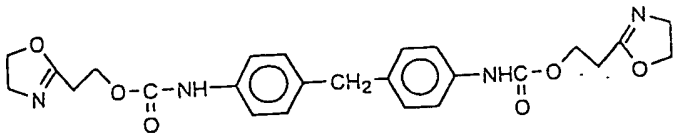


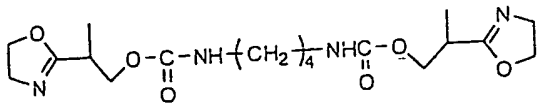






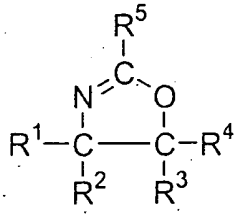
and





10. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 3, wherein the polymer comprises a recurring unit having a 2-oxazolyl group in the side chain thereof which is obtained by homopolymerizing a monomer unit containing a 2-oxazolyl group or copolymerizing said monomer with other monomer unit(s) copolymerizable with the 2-oxazolyl group-containing monomer.

11. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 10, wherein the polymers resulting from the homopolymerization or copolymerization of a monomer represented by the following formula (2) are used alone or in combination with another monomer:



(2)

wherein R^1, R^2, R^3 and R^4 each independently represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl group or an aryl group, wherein R^1, R^2, R^3 and R^4 each does not independently represent a hydrogen atom at the same time, and the alkyl group or the aryl group may have a substituent, and R^5 represents an organic group having an unsaturated bond that can undergo addition polymerization.

12. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 11, wherein the monomers are selected from the group consisting of 2-vinyl-2-oxazoline, 2-vinyl-4-methyl-2-oxazoline, 2-vinyl-5-ethyl-2-oxazoline, 2-isopropenyl-2-oxazoline, 2-isopropenyl-4-methyl-2-oxazoline, 2-isopropenyl-4-ethyl-2-oxazoline and 2-propenyl-4-ethyl-2-oxazoline.

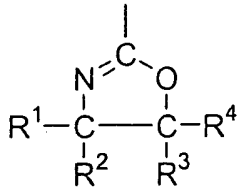
13. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 12, wherein the monomers are selected from the group consisting of 2-vinyl-2-oxazoline and 2-isopropenyl-2-oxazoline, and these monomers can be used in combination of two or more.

14. (currently amended) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein the amount of the oxazoline compound is in a range of 0.5 to 200% by weight of the binder for the constitution layer in which the compound is incorporated.

15. (currently amended) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim 1, wherein the organic silver salt is present in an amount between 0.1 and 5 g/m^2.

16. (previously presented) The photothermographic material as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein the amount of the photosensitive silver halide is, in terms of the coated amount of silver per 1 m^2 of the material, from 0.03 to 0.6 g/m^2 relative to 1 mole of the organic silver salt, or the photosensitive silver halide is present in an amount from 0.01 to 0.5 mole.

17. (previously presented) A photothermographic material comprising a support having provided on at least one side thereof a photosensitive silver halide, a photo-insensitive organic silver salt, a reducing agent for silver ion and a binder, wherein at least one layer constituting said photothermographic material comprises an oxazoline compound, wherein said oxazoline compound is a compound having two or more 2-oxazolyl groups represented by the following formula (1) in the molecule,



(1)

wherein R^1, R^2, R^3 and R^4 each independently represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl group or an aryl group, wherein R^1, R^2, R^3 and R^4 each does not independently represent a hydrogen atom at the same time, and the alkyl group or the aryl group may have a substituent, wherein at least one of constitution layer or layers provided on the same side of the support as said layer comprising the photo-insensitive organic silver salt comprises the oxazoline compound, and wherein the oxazoline compound is a low molecular weight compound having two or more 2-oxazolyl groups further comprising an organic connecting group between the two 2-oxazolyl groups.